Next morning the nest was still in the same place, but ~~my informant's~~ the friend hesitated about going up to it, and as they delayed, talking, ~~the nest~~ it vanished in the twinkling of an eye and the opportunity passed.

The nest itself is sufficiently potent to bring good fortune without the mätsqus. Not many years ago a man saw one of these nests containing a large green egg. Stretching out his musket he touched the egg with one end of it. Then he carefully hid his musket for one year in a cleft of the rocks where no water could reach it, nor did he mention what he had seen to anyone. When the year had elapsed he fetched his rifle from its hiding-place and again began to use it. ~~But now~~ Thenceforth he never missed his aim with it; every shot brought down ~~this~~ an animal. ~~at which it was aimed.~~

Before the days of muskets good fortune could likewise be obtained by the fortunate discoverer of a nest of a mätsqus. A nest always contains small particles of the skin of all animals, including the skins of human beings plucked from them in their sleep by humming-birds and toads. To gain fortune the finder must touch the nest with ~~his~~ such as is always carried by hunters, stick, then break it, and throw it away, saying as he does so:

"May I see you at ----- to-morrow."(1)

He names his favourite hunting ground. The finder must not say anything to anyone about his discovery, and for one year he must observe continence. If he then go to the hunting-ground which he named ~~to~~ at the nest he will there find his stick, the one which he broke when he touched the nest, though ~~this~~ it will be invisible to anyone else. Adhering to its end will be four hairs of the mätsqus. These he must ~~take and~~ wrap in some of his own clothing, taking care that it is ~~some~~ an article which he has long worn and which is accordingly saturated with him, ~~and hide for a year~~. During this period ~~he~~ he must observe continence. ~~Now~~ Two years after finding the nest he will be able to hunt with phenomenal success. The knowledge of ~~this~~ the proper procedure has been handed down in the family of ~~my~~ the informant for many generations.

On the occasion when ~~he and his friend~~ the two had seen the nest they continued

(1) This means next year. ~~...~~

their journey, each chiding the other for his failure to take advantage of the opportunity put in their paths. Before long they saw a footprint where never man had been. It was that of Twal~~tet~~ ätlit, the supernatural hunter of mountain goats. In spite of ~~my informant's~~ remonstrances, ~~his comrade~~ the friend scraped up a little of the dirt from the footprint into his handkerchief. In this he did wrong, especially as he had failed to take advantage of the opportunity pres nted to him by the nest of the monster toad. That night as the two were encamped a slide came thundering down bedide them, and they barely escaped with their lives. Not long afterwards ~~my informant's friend~~ the erring man died, insane. This was unquestionably due to his recklessness in handling the earth where the supernatural one had trod.

no space

This point illustrates the danger of near approach to a matsqus, a theme well exemplified in the stories which follow this chapter. Such perils must be counteracted according to differently according to the traditions of different ancestral families. One common method is toseek a lonely spot in the woods and there hollow out a shelter beneath an overhanging rock or fallen tree-trunk where the person who has been exposed to danger must remain for four days, eating nothing and at intervals scrubbing his body with branches of Devil's Club, spruce and other rough plants. Thes protect him from the evil effects of the monster.

Similar in function to the matsqus, and equally dangerous to the unwary, is the s siutɬ. The latter is supposed to have been created on this earth, at Bella Bella, in the beginning of time by Yulatimut.(1) It was at first the canoe made by the carpenter, and then turned loose by him to range the mountains and fiords, as it has ever since, equally at home on land and in water.

(1). See p.

~~670~~
~~502~~

The Sisiutl.

~~5147~~

Long ago a man was hunting in the mountains when he saw a salmon which changed in an instant to a salmon-like monstrosity with two heads but no tail. The hunter lunged at it with his stick, and in so doing started a slide which carried the salmon down the mountain. As this was taking place, the hunter said,

"Go down the mountain, salmon; I will get you at the bottom."

When he reached the foot of the new slide he saw the fish lying clear on the stones. He cut it up and slung it on a cedar bark rope. Now this salmon was a sisiutl, the first that had ever been seen, and the hunter obtained ~~x!ek!wale~~ supernatural good fortune ~~-!ona!a-adjut~~ ~~x!ek!wala!djut~~ from his experience. ~~and He~~ also took the name of sisiutl, ~~This was~~ a designation which has been handed down ~~and perished but~~ until recently.

After this adventure many people hunted for the sisiutl, and with fair success in early days, but now it cannot be found, owing to the failure of hunters to observe ceremonial chastity. When obtained, a sisiutl was cut into small pieces, one of which worn upon the person would give a certain hardness of flesh which an arrow could not penetrate. ~~The rover animating the sisiutl is siut.~~

Sometimes the sisiutl assumes the form of a ~~kake~~ spring or coho salmon. Not long ago a Bella Bella man, travelling in a canoe, ate one of these, ~~another salmon~~, ~~which joined itself together~~ Once devoured, it reformed itself, made its way by consuming the man's ~~inside of him, carried away his~~ lower jaw, then jumped overboard and was lost.

no space

Sometimes the mere appearance of a sɛsiutɬ does not bring misfortune to the beholder, even if he has not the necessary knowledge, or courage, to take advantage of it. The following is an instance.

On one occasion

good fortune, the "salmon" must have been a sɛsiutɬ.

Another quality of the s siutł is that it can be used as a charm. If xxx a man, while in a pure condition through the observance of ceremonial chastity, eat a small portion of the flesh, it renders him proof against bullet or arrow. An intelligent Bella Coola stated that his father's brother had done so on one occasion, with the result that a bullet, fired by his wife's mother's father, fell harmless at his feet after striking him.

Medicine can also be obtained from a s siutł. When one of these fish-like creatures swims through a pond, wriggling as it goes, it frequently sheds some of its scales. These become lilies,(1) from the roots of which a tonic can be brewed. They can be collected by anyone, and the places where they grow are well known, but certain rules must be followed. Before reaching the pond the gatherer must find four spruce saplings, cut from each a bough projecting eastward and lay these two by two, beside the water, with a space between. After plucking the lily roots he must place them on the ground between the xx spruce branches, and tie the whole into a bundle with strips of dyed and undyed cedar bark. He must be careful to wind these wrappings clockwise. On arriving at the house where the tonic is to be prepared, the bundle must be thrown in through the smoke vent, never carried through the door. After these precautions the medicine can be prepared with safety. The roots are cut into thin slices and boiled for four days: a sick person then drinks several cupsful of the brew, which is particularly good for the blood. This remedy is especially effective if the patient is observing ceremonial chastity. The person administering the potion sees to it that the one being treated conforms to certain regulations for fourty days. He must not eat fresh meat, fresh salmon, or any food prepared by a widow or a catamenial woman; he must not approach too closely a girl who is secluded following puberty, and he must observe absolute continence, not even sleeping with his wife. Death follows the breaking of any of these taboos.

(1). O the species known a tatkan łp or walił̨ikwatsałats ałats, "The most potent of x the pond".

~~676~~
605

~~THE~~ The QOKÄN'I .

Although supernatural good fortune is most frequently obtained from either a mätsqun or a ~~s~~siutl, it can be derived from other supernatural beings. In such cases the acquisition is seldom dangerous. The following tale describes the qökan'i.

Long before the coming of the white man, but very long after the first people came to this earth, a certain Kitsaqut man, named Wikwanutl was snaring mountain goats on Mt. Toopinatl when he heard on the upper slopes a peculiar cry which he recognized, from descriptions given him by the old people as the note of a qökan'i. This is a supernatural bird which if a man who knows the proper procedure kills it, brings good fortune to the slayer. The bird is about the size of a crow, with a broad bill, beak and blue-black iridescent plumage. Its note resembles that of a swan. The peculiarity of the bird is that its flesh and bones are of mountain goat grease. Even its droppings are of this valuable substance, and it is these which are specially prized. Long ago this bird was comparatively common, but all have now fled beyond the range of the white man's rifle.

W kwan knew what to do, so he crept stealthily up the mountain armed with his hunting stick only. Presently he saw a qökan'i feeding on a mountain goat which had been caught in one of the hunters' snares. It answered to the descriptions Wikwanutl and heard, and when it defecated he could see that its droppings were like solidified mountain goat grease. The hunter crawled near, and took advantage of the instant when the bird was within the goat's stomach to leap forward, so that he was able to club it with his stick when the head reappeared. W kwan twisted the neck of the bird until the head separated from the body. Then he flung the head behind him, to the right, without noting where it went. When this is done the bird is able to return ~~for it~~, since, like all other living creatures, when it seems to die it does no more than cast its cloak of flesh. Then the hunter cut the bird's body into

~~IIII~~

halves, throwing the right portion in the same direction as he had thrown the head, while he carefully wrapped the left half in his cape of cedar bark. Next he collected the droppings and wrapped them in evergreen boughs. Carefully carrying his treasures he went down the mountain, and ~~cut~~ hid them in a niche in the trunk of a cedar tree, ~~at which where he had hidden them~~, before he went home.

Next day, Wikwanutl did not hunt but returned to the recess, drew out the bird's half-body, and dried it over a fire, as if he were toasting salmon for winter use. At night he went home, still refraining from telling anyone what he had done. For four days he dried the meat, then carefully closed the recess and went away.

For one year Wikwanutl did not hunt. Then he reopened the recess and saw that the meat was fresh and juicy, as if newly prepared. He drew forth the droppings and carried them off with him in a small bag. Fortune followed him. By using a small piece of the solidified grease on his traps he had wonderful success. At length he told his fellow-villagers what he had obtained and they were envious of his good luck. He continued to prosper, and at last sold the droppings for a large amount of goods. The half-body he carefully preserved, and then as old man he showed his son where it was concealed. The latter prospered throughout his life, owing to this possession, and when he had ~~become~~ become an old man he told his son about it, so that he had the same good fortune as his father and grandfather. But the great-grandson was too lazy to take the trouble of going with his father to the place where the section of the bird was hidden, so that the treasure was lost.

loaded salmon are identical with those respecting the giant toad. Of a similar nature is the bird, qo kan i, which somewhat resembles a small crow but is peculiar in that its excrement is mountain goat grease. This grease is a very powerful bait. There is not the same danger attached to owning either a double-headed salmon or a qo kan i as there is to the sight of a giant toad, though the benefits which can be derived are identical.

The Snusx.

There is a fourth giver of supernatural good fortune, the mythical snusx. This creature lives in the ocean, perhaps sometimes in rivers, and can occasionally be seen resting on the surface with its long golden hair floating on the water. The hair appears always to be flecked with eagle down, but in reality it is a mass of barnacles, which are the equivalent of eagle down to this under-sea dweller. If the observer, be brave, he will paddle cautiously near until he can twist a lock of the hair around his paddle and break it off. He must not touch the hair with his hands, but must dangle it outside the canoe, still wrapped about his paddle, until he reaches the shore, when he must conceal it in some lonely place for one year. After that period he can use a single hair, or piece of one, as bait, it will be enough to attract animals to his traps or salmon to his weir, exactly as with the mountain goat grease excrement of qo kan i or a stick that has come in contact with a giant toad. If the person who has pared off the hair with his paddle should be foolish or ignorant enough to bring his spoil into his canoe, he, and all with him, are rendered incapable of movement and the craft with its occupants sinks beneath the sea.

An informant's father's cousin once saw one of these animals when paddling in company with a number of others to Kimsquit. The sea was smooth as glass when their attention was attracted by a number of small ripples, spreading in a half moon shape from what they realised was the head of a snusx. The hair crossed the ripples but did not rise or fall with them. The

~~963~~ 3293 ~~682~~ 679

back of the animal's head was nearest the canoe so ~~it seemed a favourable~~ the opportunity seemed favourable for ~~to~~ obtaining some of its hair. Cautiously the men paddled nearer, but at the last moment the steersman feared to drive the canoe in among the golden tresses, ~~instead~~ no veered off ~~so that~~ and the craft passed along one side of the mass of hair. The animal had shown no sign of being aware of their presence, but it now began to turn away from them so that ~~thus~~ its floating hair remained between them and its head. As it turned, the hair ~~did~~ moved with it so that, although the impression remained of a floating mat, there must have been some motive power ~~within~~ to ~~explain why~~ cause it to ~~did~~ remain ~~streaming~~ streaming out straight behind. Each strand of hair moved through the ripples without being affected. Though the paddlers strained to the utmost to see the animal's face it thwarted their efforts by this continuous slow turning, until at last they went on their way, ~~discouraged~~ disappointed.

The Mother of Snakes ~~007 3294~~

Yet another creature from which supernatural good fortune has been ~~A salmon.~~ obtained is the Mother of Snakes.

~~SA 2189~~

A family living at Nutlex were reduced to the point of starvation through the failure of their salmon weir. It seemed as if the fish avoided it. A son of the family, who had been in trouble with a woman down below, one day went off into the woods not far from his village, where he saw what he thought was a black bear. ~~but~~ When it came nearer he realised that its chest was tipped with silver and that its tongue kept shooting far beyond its jaws, hence that it must be the Mother of Snakes. This creature combines the qualities of bear and snake; it is about the size of the former while it ~~is as if~~ appears to have a snake ~~were~~ wrapped around its chest. It always pursues mortals and slays them, unless they know the proper means of escape. Luckily the youth's father had long ago warned him what to ~~be~~ do if chased by ~~the Mother of Snakes~~ one, so he at once dashed off. First he ran down hill but the animal gained on him; then he ran up hill but still the monster drew nearer. The only ~~time~~ way that the fugitive could increase his lead was ~~when either~~ by ascending or descending in zigzags, since ~~then~~ the brute's heavy legs kept slipping. All day the pursuit continued, until towards dusk the youth was almost exhausted. Then at last he saw what he was looking for, a stump with erect splinters projecting upwards. Pushing these apart with his hands, ~~the youth~~ he leapt through the opening ~~as~~ thus made, then circled the tree once sunwise, and pulled away one of the splinters. Now the Mother of Snakes must always follow directly in the tracks of its quarry, and as it jumped through the opening between the splinters the youth struck it across the back with the splinter which he had pulled out. Down the monster fell dead.

With his knife the youth cut off some of the animal's meat which he carried home, saying nothing to his father. Early the next morning the old man went to look at his salmon weir, but as usual ~~there~~ it was ~~nothing~~ empty. As soon, however, as his son drew near, the river became packed with salmon, all heading towards the trap which was soon filled.

"It seems as if you attracted the salmon like a magnet", said the father to his